

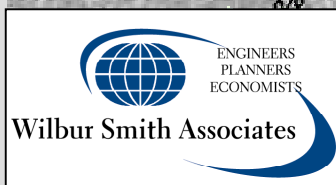


Indiana Department of Transportation

# SR 37 EA/CORRIDOR STUDY from Noblesville to Marion



PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.1 TYPES OF FACILITIES TO BE STUDIED</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.2 DEFINING THE “NO-BUILD” OPTION</b>	<b>3</b>
1.2.1 EXISTING HIGHWAY PLANS	3
1.3.2 “No-BUILD” ALTERNATIVE	5
<b>2.0 CORRIDOR OPTIONS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1 ALTERNATIVES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES</b>	<b>5</b>
1990 SR 37 ADDED TRAVEL LANES STUDY PREPARED BY INDOT	5
1994 SR 37 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT STUDY PREPARED BY THE SR 37 HIGHWAY TASK FORCE	5
1996 I-69 / SR 37 MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY (MIS) PREPARED BY THE CORRADINO GROUP, SPONSORED BY INDOT	6
2000 NORTHEAST CONNECTIONS MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY (MIS)/ DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY (DEIS) BEING PREPARED BY PARSONS, BRINCKERHOFF, QUADE & DOUGLAS, INC. SPONSORED BY THE INDIANAPOLIS MPO	6
<b>2.2 ALTERNATIVES TO BE CONSIDERED</b>	<b>6</b>
ALTERNATIVE NO. 1	6
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2	7
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3	7
ALTERNATIVE NO. 4	8
ALTERNATIVE NO. 5	8
ALTERNATIVE NO. 6	8
ALTERNATIVE NO. 7	9
<b>APPENDIX OF FIGURES</b>	<b>10</b>

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The SR 37 EA/Corridor Study examines the condition of the existing facility, and appropriate measures and timing to address any deficiencies (needs). The study will look at a variety of route options and highway type alternatives and will present findings on whether or not any of the corridor investments are feasible. Each alternative will be evaluated based on its ability to meet the following evaluation criteria:

1. Ability to meet the Purpose and Need defined for the study corridor.
2. Need Based on Traffic—Do any of the highway options need to be built to handle current and forecasted traffic volumes, and if the latter applies, what time frame is reasonable?
3. Engineering and Cost —Are there any unusual engineering difficulties, and what would each alternative improvement cost the agency?
4. Environmental —Does the alternative have any environmental fatal flaws, and is mitigation for environmental impacts available?
5. Travel Efficiency —Will the highway improvements cause sufficient road user benefits to warrant the investment?

This alternative discussion will first define the “No-Build” Alternative for the SR 37 Corridor and then briefly describe each alternative being evaluated with this study.

## 1.1 TYPES OF FACILITIES TO BE STUDIED

Several types of facilities will be evaluated for the SR 37 corridor. The Alternatives being discussed will include one or a combination of the following:

1. “No-build” - Only programmed (“committed”) improvements.
2. 4-Lane Divided Expressway (non-freeway) (Partial limited access, at-grade intersections)
3. 4-Lane Freeway (Fully limited access, over/underpasses, interchanges)
4. 2-Lane Improved (Passing lanes, two-way left turn lanes, etc.)
5. Purchase of Limited Access Right of Way for future corridor widening / expansion

## 1.2 DEFINING THE “NO-BUILD” OPTION

### 1.2.1 Existing Highway Plans

INDOT’s 2000-2025 draft Long Range Plan lists SR 37 between Indianapolis and Marion as a Regional Corridor. A Regional Corridor is a mid-level facility relative to mobility vs. access, between a Statewide Mobility Corridor and a Local Access Corridor. Such corridors provide mobility within regions of the state, and serve as connections to smaller cities and regions. When evaluating possible improvements to a Regional Corridor, upgrades such as added travel lanes, intersection improvements, turning lanes, grade separations, and modifications to meet design standards should be evaluated.

Several improvement projects along or adjacent to SR 37 have already been programmed in INDOT’s 2000-2025 Long Range Plan and / or are programmed in the local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO’s) Long Range Plans. **Table 1.2.1** outlines the committed projects. These improvements will be incorporated in the “No-Build” alternative, against which all other alternatives will be compared.

**Table 1.2.1**  
**Summary of INDOT Programmed Improvements**

County	Location	Planned Improvement	Des. No.	Status
Hamilton	From 2.38 miles N SR 32/38 to SR 28	Resurface (Non-3R/4R Standards)	0100220	RFL: 7/10/01 LET: 10/16/01
Hamilton	From 2.38 miles N of SR 32 to 3.46 miles N of SR 32	Added Travel Lanes	9133575	----
Hamilton	From 2.38 miles north of SR 32/38 to SR 28	Pavement Rehab. (3R/4R Standards)	9610170	RFL: 12/20/05 LET: 3/25/06
Hamilton	From I-69 N 10.69 miles to end of dual lanes	Added Travel Lanes	9706360	----
Hamilton	From 3.21 miles N of SR 32 to 4.83 miles N of SR 32	Road Construction	9803010	----
Hamilton	At 206th Street	Intersection Improvements w/ added Turn Lanes	8913385	RFL: 7/15/02 LET: 10/25/02
Hamilton	At 206th Street	New Signal Installation	981338A	RFL: 7/15/02 LET: 10/25/02
Madison	From SR 28 to SR 26	Pavement Rehabilitation (3R/4R Standards)	9706580	RFL: 10/25/03 LET: 1/25/04
Madison	Bridge over Big Duck Creek	Bridge Rehabilitation and Repair	9906581	RFL: 10/25/03 LET: 1/25/04
Madison	From SR 28 to SR 26	Sign Modernization	990658X	RFL: 10/25/03 LET: 1/25/04
Madison	At SR 28	Traffic Signals Modernization	990658A	RFL: 10/25/03 LET: 1/25/04
Grant	At SR 26	Flashers, Modernize	990658B	RFL 10/25/03 LET: 1/25/04

RFL – “Ready for Letting” Date

LET – “Letting” Date

The Pavement Rehabilitation project from SR 28 to SR 26 is included on the Madison County Council of Governments’ (MCCOG’s) 2001-2003 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Part 5 (Unfunded Rural Projects) in Appendix C of the Indianapolis MPO’s Year 2025 Regional Transportation Plan also includes a roadway widening project (Widen 2-lane to 4-lane) on SR 37 from SR 213 to SR 13.

## 1.3.2 “No-Build” Alternative

Each of the improvements listed in Table 1.3.2 will be incorporated into the “No-Build” Alternative, defined as the existing roadway plus committed improvements. Many of the projects should help remedy deficiencies along portions of the corridor, and must be considered as an existing condition when comparing the “No-Build” to each of the alternatives. The designs of the pavement rehabilitation and intersection improvement projects typically incorporate upgrading the horizontal alignment, vertical alignment, and intersection sight distances to meet current design standards where feasible. Therefore, existing sight distance and curvature deficiencies at the 206<sup>th</sup> Street intersection, and along the sections of roadway from Allisonville Road to SR 28 and from SR 28 to SR 26 are likely to be addressed during the design of these projects. However, due to the uncertainty of such improvements, the “No-Build” Alternative will assume that such deficiencies will not be remedied with the pavement rehabilitation projects. The projects without a set “Ready for Letting” or “Letting” date will also be ignored for the purpose of determining the “No-Build” option since the future of these improvements is unclear.

## 2.0 CORRIDOR OPTIONS

### 2.1 ALTERNATIVES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

Each of the previous studies described in the Purpose and Need Statement resulted in various improvement recommendations for the SR 37 Corridor. Therefore, each of the alternatives developed in the previous studies will be investigated as a possible alternative.

#### **1990 SR 37 Added Travel Lanes Study Prepared by INDOT**

Recommended a four-lane divided highway from Allisonville Road to SR 213, on existing alignment. No improvements north of SR 213 (other than programmed resurfacing improvements) were suggested.

#### **1994 SR 37 Corridor Improvement Study Prepared by the SR 37 Highway Task Force**

Recommended a four-lane divided highway from Allisonville Road to SR 9 on existing alignment.

## **1996 I-69 / SR 37 Major Investment Study (MIS) Prepared by The Corradino Group, Sponsored by INDOT**

Recommended a four-lane divided highway from Allisonville Road to Strawtown Road, on new alignment to the east from just south of 206<sup>th</sup> Street to Strawtown Road. Study did not extend beyond Strawtown Road.

## **2000 Northeast CONNECTIONS Major Investment Study (MIS)/ Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) being prepared by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Sponsored by The Indianapolis MPO**

Final EIS is not yet completed. Four possible highway improvement alternatives remain for consideration. The most likely highway alternative would provide a 6-lane expressway (non-freeway) on SR 37 from I-69 to just north of Noblesville. After completion of the MIS/Draft EIS, a final EIS for the highway elements will be sponsored by INDOT.

## **2.2 ALTERNATIVES TO BE CONSIDERED**

Along with the “No-Build” and previous studied improvement alternatives, several new alternatives / combinations will be discussed. Each of these alternatives will proceed through the study process. Some will be dismissed early in the process for not adequately addressing the study’s purpose and need. Others will proceed through the entire study process and will eventually be assessed for how well they meet the five tests of feasibility identified in the introduction.

An important part of any transportation corridor study is exploring transit alternatives such as light rail and/or bus services. However, a corridor must meet certain criteria for a transit system to be a viable and cost effective alternative. Chapter 30 of the Highway Capacity Manual 2000 states that an area must first be found to be transit-supportive in order for it to become a viable alternative. More specifically, a transportation analysis zone (TAZ) must have a household density of 3 units/gross acre or a job density of 4 jobs/gross acre to be considered transit-supportive. Based on these requirements the three major communities along SR 37 (Noblesville, Elwood, and Marion) are not transit-supportive, and populations based on forecasted growth trends do not appear to support such a transportation mode the future. Therefore, transit alternatives will not be considered viable alternatives as a part of the study. The following highway alternatives will be evaluated:

### **Alternative No. 1**

“No-Build” Alternative: Existing plus programmed / committed improvements.

The No-Build alternative, as illustrated in **Figure 2.2.1 (Appendix of Figures)** consists of improvements that are already planned and programmed in INDOT’s transportation project

development program. This list of projects primarily consists of intersection and signal improvements, pavement rehabilitation, and bridge rehabilitation. These improvements are scheduled to take place over the next five years. The “No Build” aspect to this scenario relates to the fact that no new improvements would emerge from this study as a recommendation to proceed through INDOT’s project development process.

## **Alternative No. 2**

Improved 2-Lane Highway from Noblesville to Marion on (or near) existing alignment.

This alternative would consist of roadway and intersection improvements to the existing SR 37, and is illustrated in **Figure 2.2.2 (Appendix of Figures)**. SR 37 would remain a two-lane highway for the entire corridor. However, spot improvements such as passing lanes, left-turn lanes, and intersection improvements, would be proposed that address roadway deficiencies and result in an overall better two-lane facility than the existing SR 37. Additionally, a part of the evaluation process for this alternative will explore the potential for purchasing limited access right-of-way for future corridor widening / expansion.

## **Alternative No. 3**

4-Lane Expressway (non-freeway) from Noblesville to Marion.

- 3a. Relocation at Strawtown
- 3b. Relocation at Elwood
- 3c. Relocation at Strawtown (3a) and Elwood (3b)

This alternative would improve SR 37 to a four-lane divided highway with partial access control, using limited access right-of-way with direct access limited to at-grade intersections with select public roads, thus creating an expressway (non-freeway) type facility. Alignment relocations near Strawtown and Elwood will also be evaluated for this alternative. Alternative 3 is illustrated in **Figure 2.2.3 (Appendix of Figures)**.

## Alternative No. 4

4-Lane Freeway from Noblesville to Marion.

- 4a. Relocation at Strawtown
- 4b. Relocation at Elwood
- 4c. Relocation at Strawtown (5a) and Elwood (5b)

This alternative would entail improving SR 37 to a limited-access, fully controlled four-lane freeway, as illustrated in **Figure 2.2.4 (Appendix of Figures)**. Access to the freeway would be limited to interchanges. All other crossroads having existing intersections with SR 37 will be terminated or provided simple grade separations (bridge over or under SR 37). The highway would follow the existing alignment where possible, but the proposed improvements may require relocations in the vicinity of Strawtown and Elwood.

## Alternative No. 5

4-Lane Divided Expressway (non-freeway) to Elwood, Improved 2-Lane Highway from Elwood to Marion

- 5a. Relocation at Strawtown
- 5b. Relocation at Elwood
- 5c. Relocation at Strawtown (5a) and Elwood (5b)

Alternative 5, as illustrated in **Figure 2.2.5 (Appendix of Figures)**, is a variation of Alternative 3 in that it involves upgrading SR 37 to a 4-Lane divided Expressway (non-freeway) between Noblesville and Elwood. However, Alternative 5 differs from Alternative 3 between Elwood and Marion, as it consists of an improved two-lane highway, similar to Alternative 2. Similarly to Alternative 2, a part of the evaluation process for the 2-Lane portion of this alternative will explore the potential for purchasing limited access right-of-way for future corridor widening / expansion.

## Alternative No. 6

4-Lane Divided Expressway (non-freeway) to 213, “No-Build” north to Marion.

This alternative is a hybrid of Alternatives 1 and 3, and is illustrated in **Figure 2.2.6 (Appendix of Figures)**. The existing four-lane expressway (non-freeway) would be extended from Noblesville to SR 213. From Route 213 to Marion, this alternative would consist of roadway and intersection improvements that are already planned or programmed, the same as the “No Build” alternative.

## Alternative No. 7

### SR 37 Relocation from SR 13 south to I-69

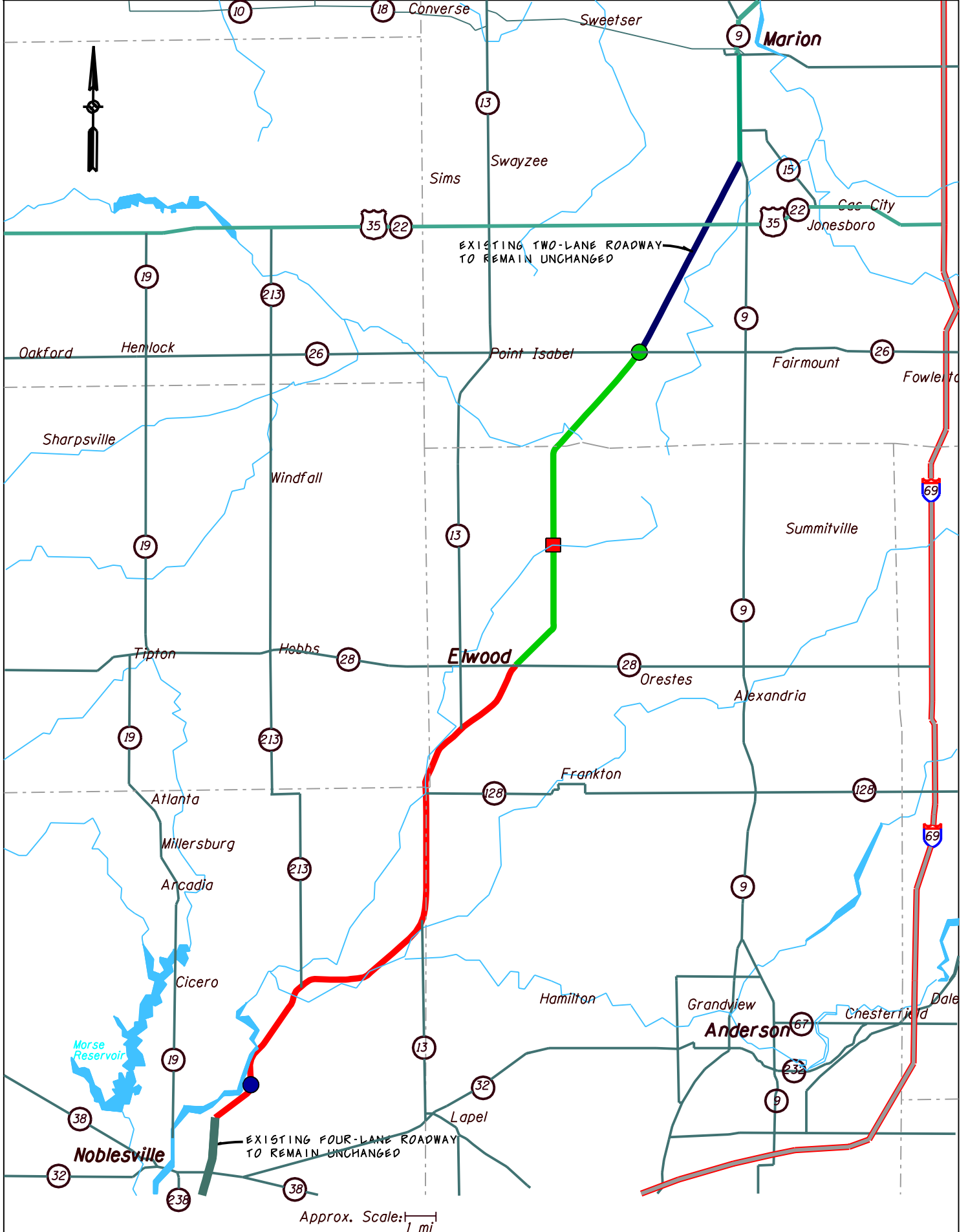
This alternative was suggested by the Stakeholders Committee at a meeting on July 24, 2001, and would involve improving the existing two-lanes of SR 13 southward from the south junction of SR 37 and SR 13 as shown in **Figure 2.2.7 (Appendix of Figures)**. SR 13 would become the new route for SR 37, being realigned around the west side of Lapel. It would eventually join the existing SR 13 alignment just north of I-69. This could serve to divert traffic from “Old” SR 37, particularly between Noblesville and I-69. This alternative could be utilized in conjunction with several of the other alternatives, primarily those with a four-lane option between Elwood and Noblesville. The recommended improvements from the Indianapolis MPO (CONNECTIONS Study) will play a large role in the evaluation of this alternative. Any proposed improvement between I-69 and Noblesville from the CONNECTIONS study will be modeled as a part of the existing facility in the evaluation of this alternative.

Some members of the Stakeholders Committee stated that the study area boundary should include the two-lane portion SR 9 north of Marion. Committee members stated that during peak season, large campers and RV's tend to create congestion along this two-lane stretch because there is no opportunity for safe passing. However, this recommendation is beyond the scope of this study. The intent of the Congressional mandate requiring this study is to examine the feasibility of roadway improvements on SR 37 in Noblesville, Elwood, and Marion. INDOT representatives from the Ft. Wayne District have stated that the district is aware of the concerns, and plans to evaluate the section SR 9 north of Marion.

# APPENDIX OF FIGURES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.1</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.2</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.3</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.4</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.5</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.6</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>FIGURE 2.2.7</b>	
<b>ALTERNATIVE NO. 7</b>	<b>8</b>



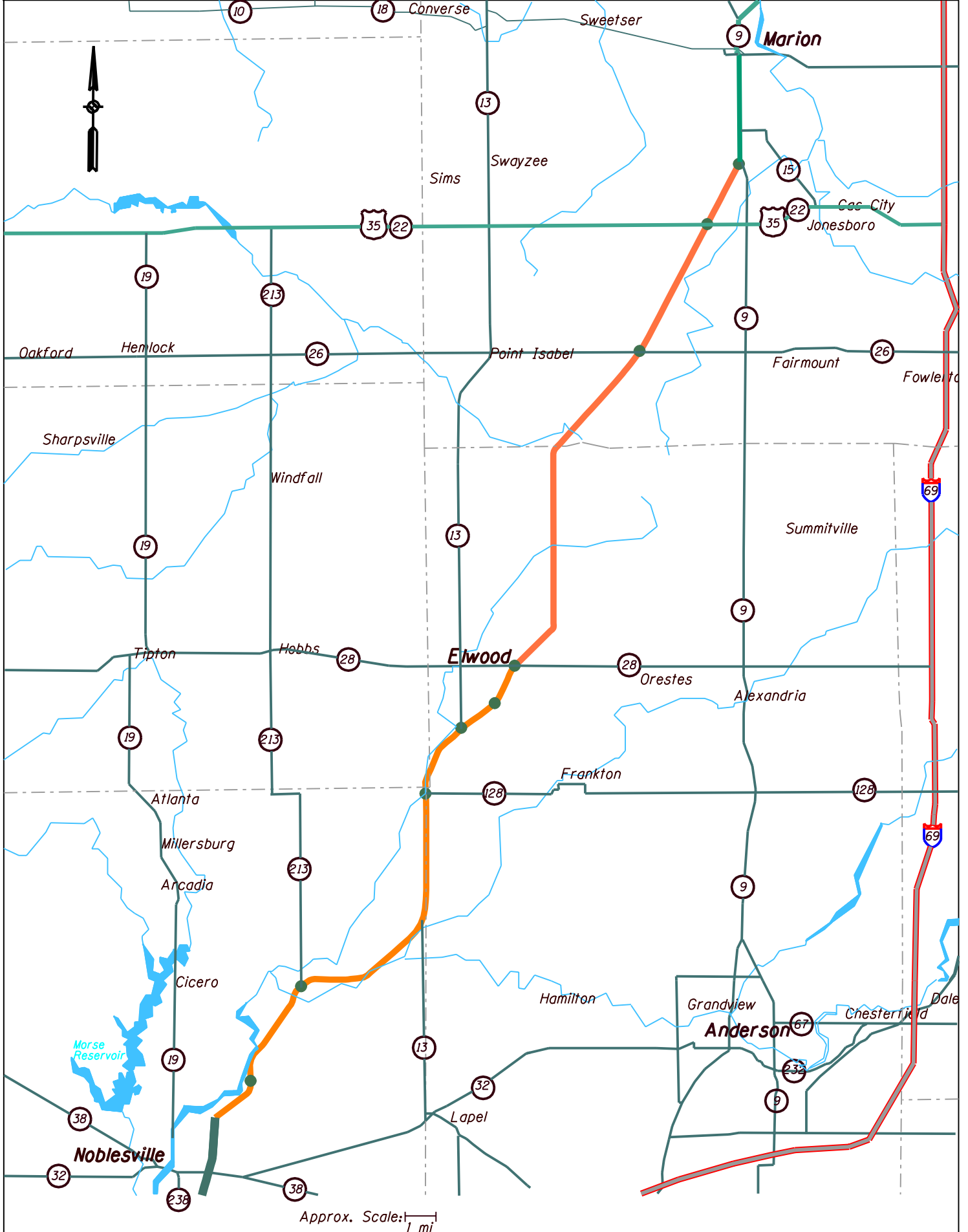
## SR 37 EA / Corridor Study

### Figure 2.2.1

Alternative No. 1 - "No-Build"

- 2006 PAVEMENT REHABILITATION
- 2004 PAVEMENT REHABILITATION & SIGN MODERNIZATION
- 2004 FLASHERS MODERNIZATION
- 2002 INTERSECTION WIDENING AND SIGNAL
- 2004 BRIDGE REHABILITATION & REPAIR





**SR 37 EA / Corridor Study**

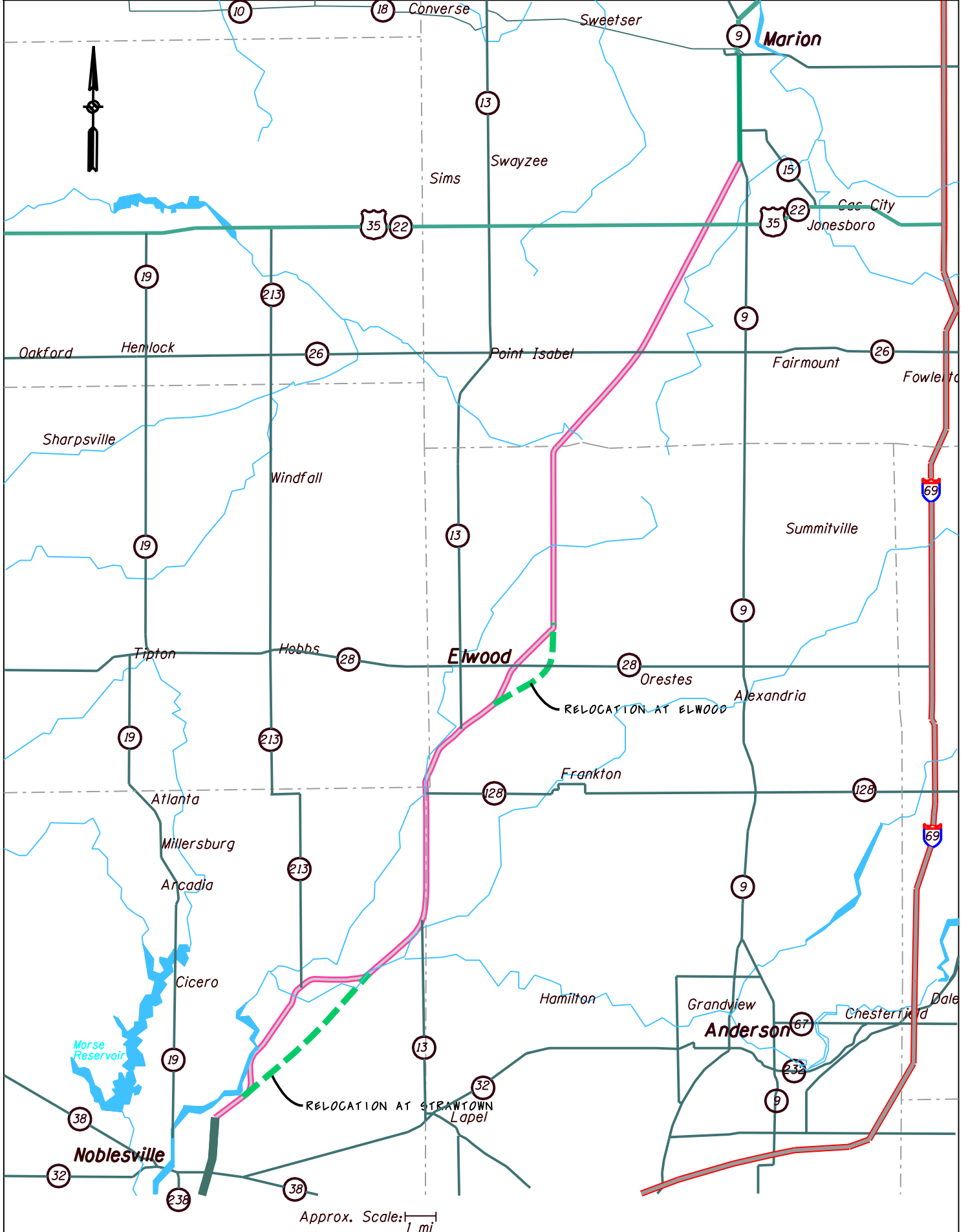
**Figure 2.2.2**  
**Alternative No. 2**

IMPROVED 2-LANE HIGHWAY

— POTENTIAL PASSING LANES  
& TWO-WAY LEFT TURN LANES

● POTENTIAL INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS



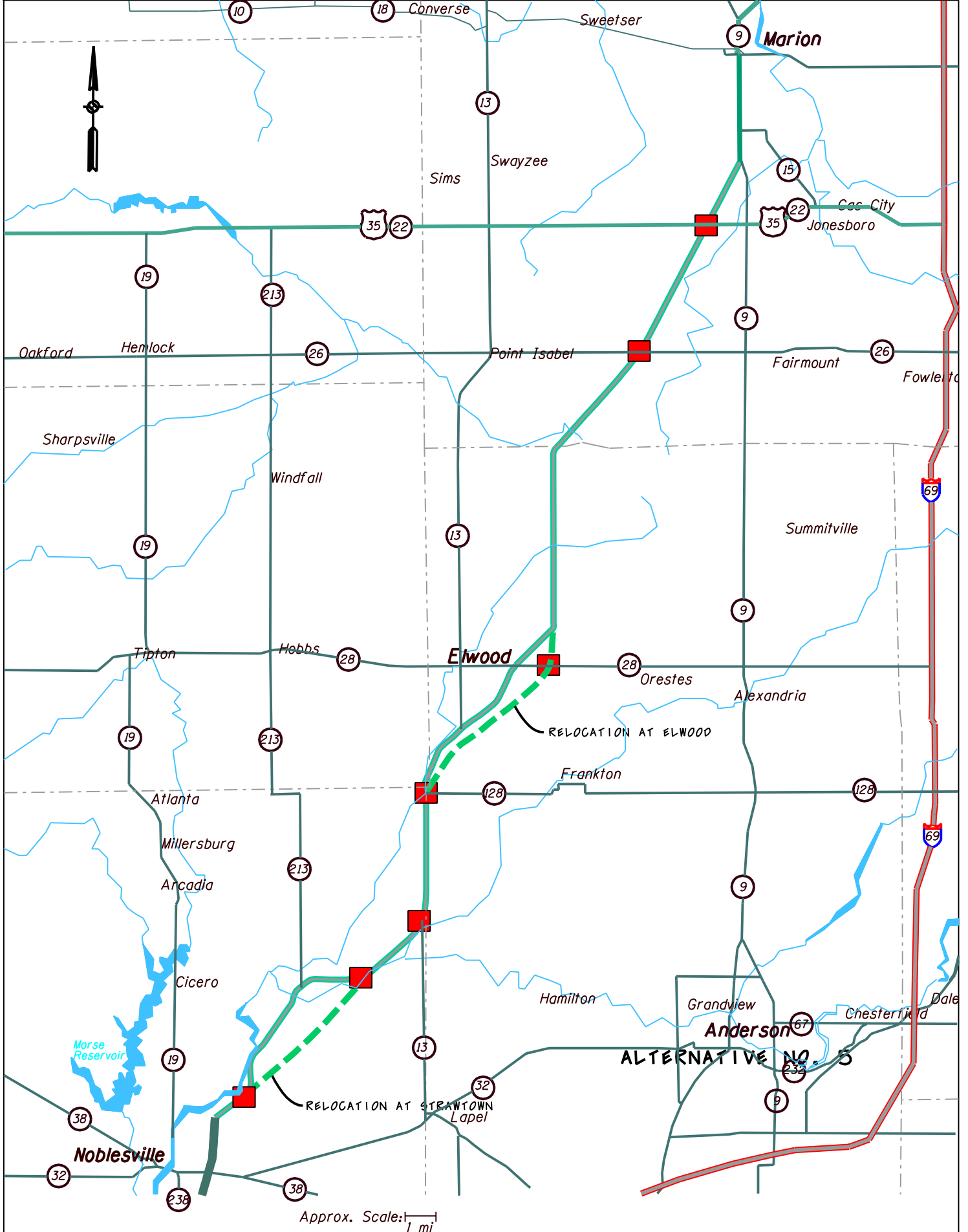


**SR 37 EA / Corridor Study**

**Figure 2.2.3**  
**Alternative No. 3**

— 4-LANE EXPRESSWAY \*NON-FREEWAY\*  
PARTIAL LIMITED ACCESS, AT-GRADE INTERSECTIONS  
- - - POTENTIAL RELOCATIONS



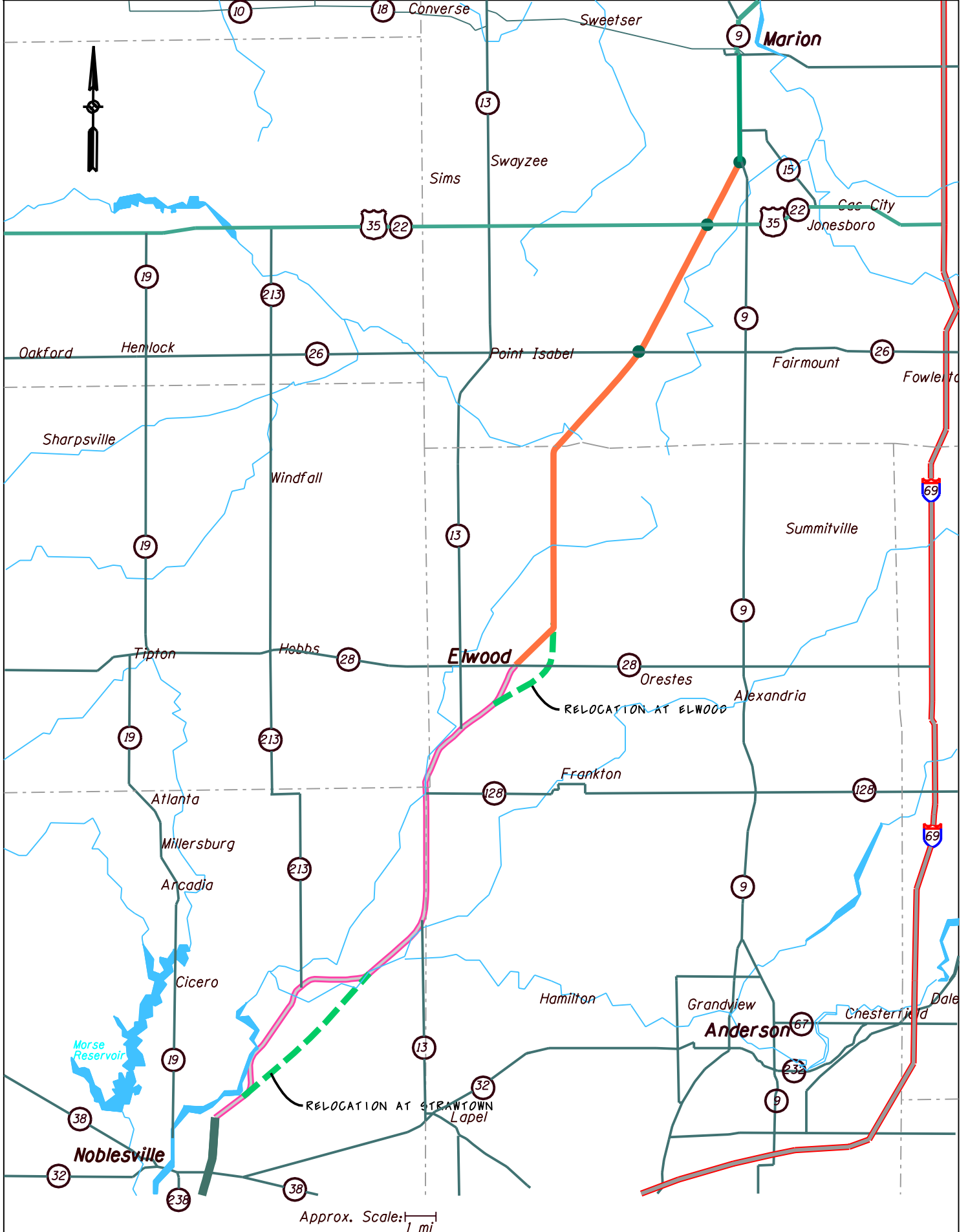


## SR 37 EA / Corridor Study

### Figure 2.2.4 Alternative No. 4

- 4-LANE FREEWAY  
FULLY LIMITED ACCESS, OVER/UNDERPASSES, INTERCHANGES
- - - POTENTIAL RELOCATIONS
- POSSIBLE INTERCHANGE



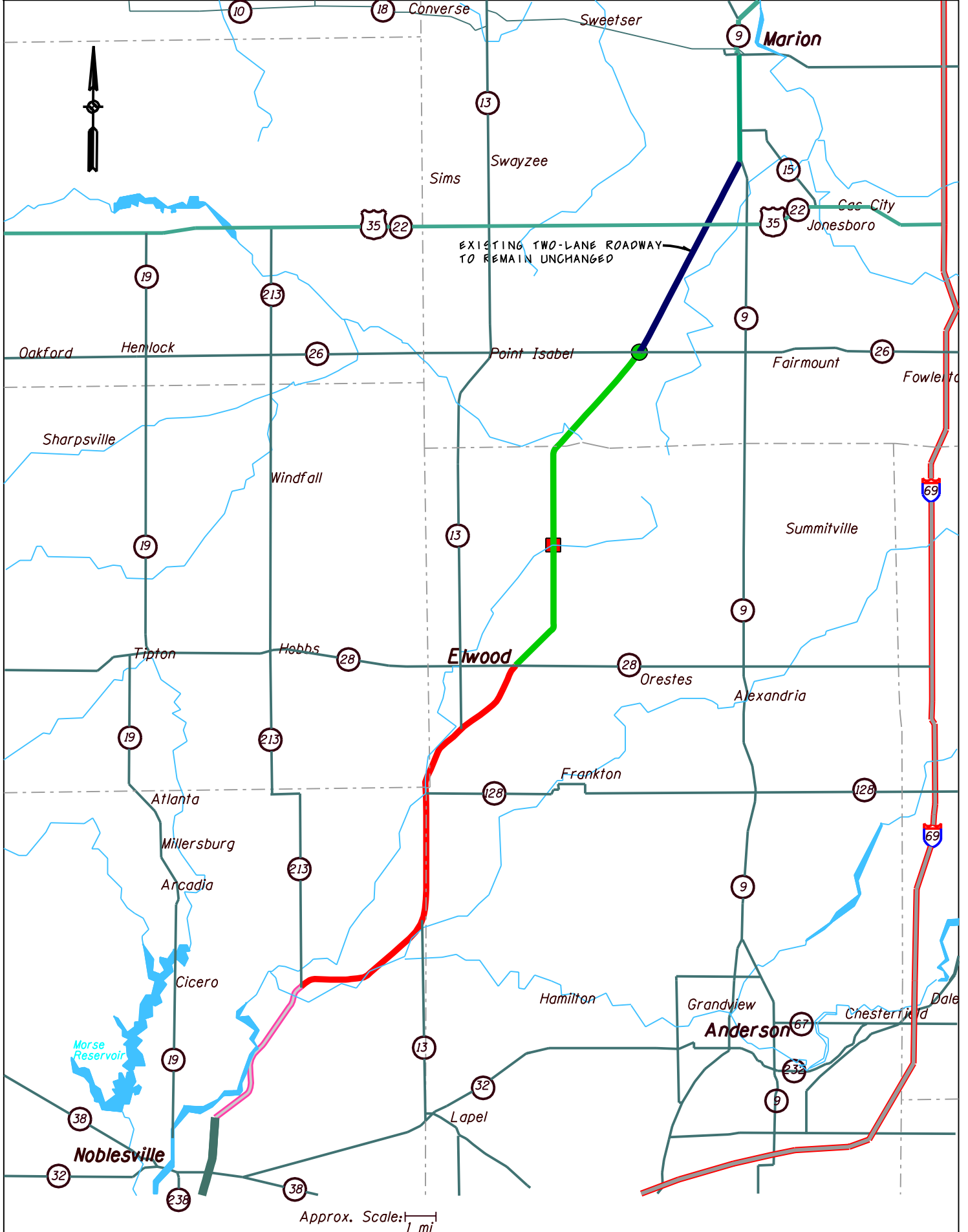


# SR 37 EA / Corridor Study

Figure 2.2.5  
Alternative No. 5

- 4-LANE DIVIDED EXPRESSWAY \*NON-FREEWAY\*
- IMPROVED 2-LANE HIGHWAY
- - - POTENTIAL RELOCATIONS
- POTENTIAL INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS



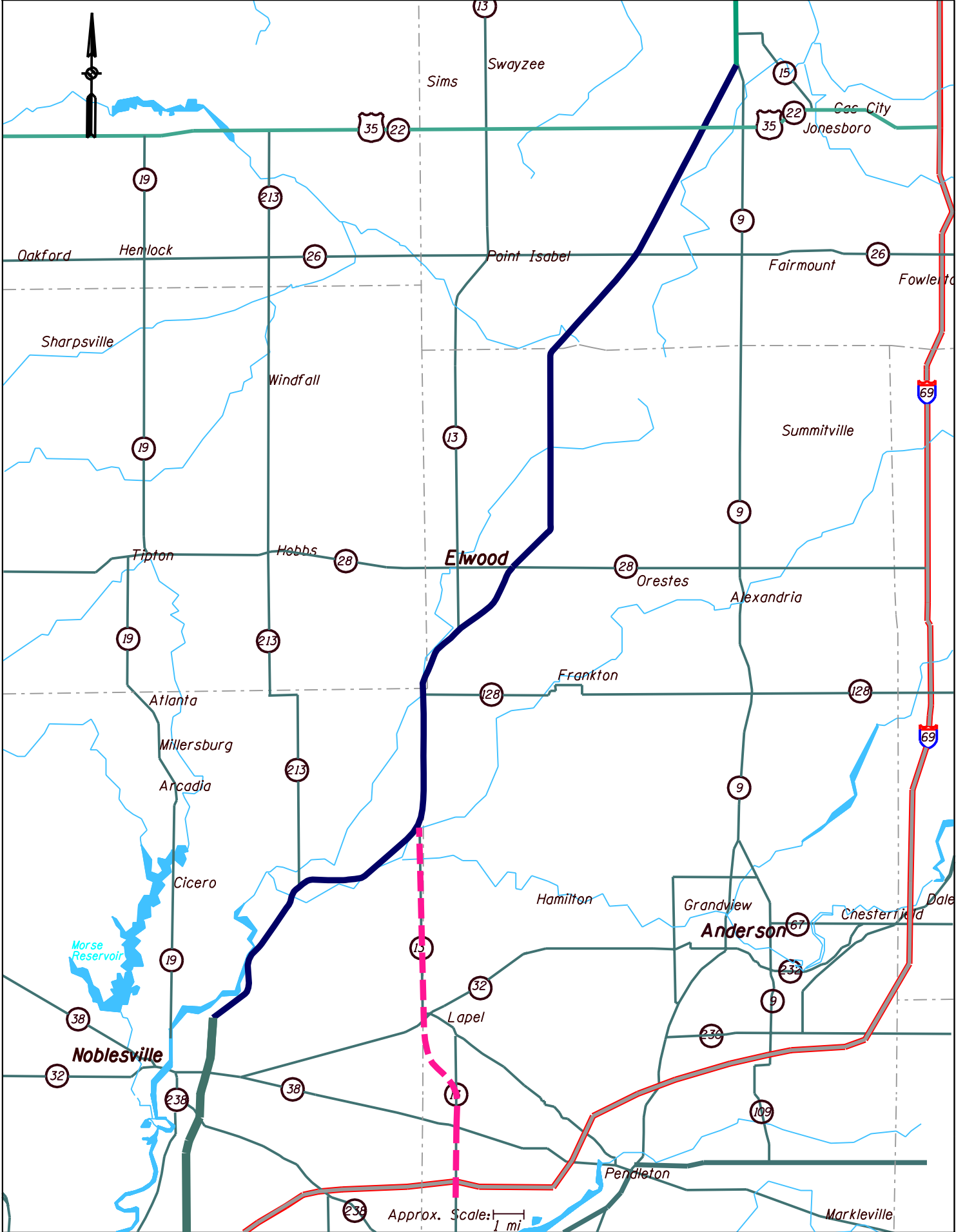


## SR 37 EA / Corridor Study

**Figure 2.2.6**  
**Alternative No. 6**

- 4-LANE EXPRESSWAY •NON-FREEWAY• FROM NOBLESVILLE TO SR 213, "NO-BUILD" FROM SR 213 TO MARION
- 4-LANE EXPRESSWAY
- 2006 PAVEMENT REHABILITATION
- 2004 PAVEMENT REHABILITATION & SIGN MODERNIZATION
- 2004 FLASHERS MODERNIZATION
- 2004 BRIDGE REHABILITATION & REPAIR





SR 37 EA / Corridor Study

Figure 2.2.7  
Alternative No. 7

SR 37 REALIGNMENT  
FROM SR 13 SOUTH TO I-69

— PROPOSED ALIGNMENT

